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IS DEPORTATION THE CURE?

BY CHASE S. OSBORN
FORMER GOVERNOR OF MICHIGAN

WE are deporting undesirable citizens.

Berger has been re-elected.

Are we making any headway in our attempts to solve our human weed problems? They are human weeds. We can get rid of them about as successfully and satisfactorily by deporting them as we could eradicate Canadian thistles by the same process. I am not certain that I know what to do with them, but I do feel that I am certain that deportation is not the cure. If it were possible to confine thought or lack of it to any particular part or corner of the earth then we might hope to accomplish something by deportation. But in this modern time when communication is nearly the easiest thing to accomplish, thought is the most difficult thing in all the world to repress, compress or successfully oppress. Even in the old days of dominant autocracy the practice of deportation was notoriously a failure. Perhaps the most notable example in modern times of an attempt to regulate by deportation was the practice of Russia during the old régime. Everybody knows just how signally Russia failed. There was something in Russia's favor, too, in the matter of law and morals. She sent her undesirables to Siberia, a portion of her own territory. This she had a legal right to do. But where are we sending our undesirables; admitting, of course, that they *are* undesirables, of which I am in no doubt? In order to avoid protests from other Governments we have addressed to them a secret note. That note probably states that we are sending them to Russia whence they are alleged to have come. It may be safely assumed that no representation will be made, or permission asked of the Soviet Government. It is equally safe to assume that if the old Government of the Czar was in power today

it would be given the same consideration that we show others that are able to look out for their interests. From this it is not difficult to conclude that not only are we adopting a policy that has always failed in the past, but that we are following it in a cowardly manner and with limited legal and almost no moral rights.

What right have we to dump on anybody anywhere a contagion, intellectual, or social, or physical, or moral, or of any kind whatsoever? Suppose that the Asiatic cholera had broken out here, as it has in the past, would we try to cure it by shipping it back to Asia where it could most illy be dealt with and where it would continue to germinate and form a world menace until the cause were eradicated? We would proceed at once to clean up our land and improve the conditions in every possible breeding-place until immunity was insured. That is exactly one of the things that we shall have to do socially and politically.

In the meantime we are confronted with an actual condition that must be met. How? Perhaps by a kind of "home" deportation or internment. In the case of the Indians we adopted something of the kind when we placed them upon reservations and restricted them there. There are not as many known so-called "Reds" as there were Redskins. It is reported that the Government has a list of some 60,000 undesirables more or less. It would not be at all impossible to intern these somewhere in a locality in America where they could have plenty of room at least to partially maintain themselves. As now they are not only a contagious lot but they are parasites as well. If necessary their reservation could be walled and guarded. It might be large enough so that they could set up their own kind of Government and try it out to their heart's content. Perhaps if they had to live in accordance with their own ideas it would operate to cure them more quickly than anything else that could be done.

This would be a safe and humane solution of the immediate confrontment. In their own "model" state of anarchy or socialism they could have with them their families. By the deportation that is being carried on now husbands are separated from wives and children from parents in a manner more cruel than in the days of African slavery, or when we pursued the Creeks and Seminoles into the swamps with bloodhounds.

When the known "Reds" are rounded up in their own Utopia we can then, with some hope of permanent success, engage in measures of cure and prevention. I used the illustration of the Canadian thistle. Permit me again to refer to that noxious weed. The best remedy for getting rid of them is to remove them from the ground they occupy and then cultivate intensely. The same recourse will cure the "Red" peril. The cultivation will have to mean cleaner and more just government, the correction of industrial justice, the abolishment of child labor, the clear demonstration that this is not a Government for the few.

There must be a general recognition and admission of the fact that if conditions were as they should be in this country, and in the world as well, there would not be so many of these socially unbalanced and intellectually hungry people. It may take a long time to bring about a state of things wherein insanities will be entirely eradicated. Of a certainty, a policy of mere deportation will not avail, even with no consideration for the humanities and injustices involved.

A wrong committed by a republic is no less than a wrong done by an autocracy, nor is a mistake lessened by the character of the agency that commits it.

CHASE S. OSBORN.